

About Chet Edwards

Congressman Chet Edwards proudly represents portions of North Texas, Central Texas and the Brazos Valley in Washington. Since first elected to the United States Congress in 1990, Chet is a respected senior member on both the House Budget and the Appropriations Committees. Chet also serves on the [Financial Services Appropriations Subcommittee](#) , [as vice chair of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee](#) , and co-chairs the House Army Caucus.

Congressman Edwards is known as a national champion for America's veterans, troops, and their families. Since becoming Chairman of the [Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee](#) in 2007, Congressman Edwards has authored an historic \$17.7 billion increase in funding for veterans health care and benefits, the largest increase in veterans funding in the history of the Veterans Administration. Chairman Edwards also played a key role in enacting the 21st Century GI Bill of Rights into law that will cover the full cost of a college education for our troops. In 2008, both the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars recognized Congressman Edwards' leadership with their national awards given to only one member of Congress.

During his 18 year tenure in Congress including 11 years of seniority on the powerful Appropriations Committee, Congressman Edwards has developed a reputation of working hard and effectively for his Central Texas constituents. This reputation is the result of his commitment to protecting jobs and the local economy by making vital federal investments in key education, health, transportation, and water programs in the 17th District. Securing important federal investments for Fort Hood, the Central Texas Veterans' Health Care System, and university

research programs at Baylor and Texas A&M Universities are also a primary focus of Congress Edwards' work in Washington.

Having represented Fort Hood, the world's largest Army base, Congressman Edwards has also played a major leadership role in support of the U.S. Army, troops, and military families. In 2007, he received the Marix Congressional Achievement Award from the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) in recognition of his work. In 2006, Congressman Edwards was honored with the Award of Merit, the highest award given by the Military Coalition, which represents 36 military and veteran groups. In 2003, the Association of the U.S. Army gave Congressman Edwards its "Legislator of the Year Award." He has been the co-chair of the House Army caucus for over a decade and served on the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committees for six years before joining the Appropriations Committee.

Early in his congressional career, Congressman Edwards became known as a leader in the fight against nuclear terrorism, and in 2001, strongly opposed cuts of \$100 million to the nuclear non-proliferation budget proposed by the Bush Administration. Serving as a member on the [Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee](#), Edwards helps to oversee key homeland defense and university research programs to protect Americans from the threat of nuclear terrorism. To ensure more cargo coming into U.S. seaports is properly inspected, Edwards supported the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission and, in 2003, helped secure \$84 million to install radiological detectors at the busiest foreign ports, so nuclear materials can be detected overseas before terrorists can get them to targets in America.

Congressman Edwards is known as a fiscal conservative who believes massive federal deficits and the \$10 trillion national debt are harmful to our economy and morally wrong to pass on to our children and grand children. The non-partisan Concord Coalition has given him its "Deficit Hawk" Award. His pro-economic, pro-agriculture record has also earned him endorsements

from both the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Farm Bureau Agfund. The U.S Chamber of Commerce has given him their "Spirit of Enterprise" Award for the past several years for his support of business. As a strong supporter of 2nd Amendment rights, Congressman Edwards has voted with the NRA 100% on gun rights issues for many years and is proud to have received the NRA's endorsement.

As a respected voice on issues facing working families, Edwards has pushed for increased access to health care for children of working families under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP), supported middle class tax cuts, and protected Medicare and Social Security benefits for America's seniors. As a lifelong person of faith, Chet has been honored by the Baptist Joint Committee and earned the Walter Cronkite Award from the Interfaith Alliance for his principled stand to keep government regulations out of our churches and houses of worship. Congressman Edwards has also been honored with the T.B. Maston Christian Ethics Award.

Congressman Edwards graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.A. in Economics from Texas A&M University in 1974. Upon graduation, he received the Earl Rudder Award, given to two outstanding seniors. He then worked for 3 years for Congressman Olin E. "Tiger" Teague, who was the most highly decorated World War II veteran in Congress and was known for 32 years as "Mr. Veteran" in Congress. At the age of 26, Edwards was encouraged by Congressman Teague to become his successor in 1978. Congressman Edwards narrowly lost in the Democratic primary to Phil Gramm, but then went on to earn an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

In the 1980's, Congressman Edwards worked at the Trammell Crow Company in commercial real estate; and owned and was the President of Edwards Communications, a rural radio station in South Texas. From 1983 to 1989, Edwards served in the Texas Senate. As a Member of the Senate Education Committee, he played an active role in reducing class sizes in Texas' public

schools and was named one of Ten Best Legislators by Texas Monthly magazine.

In 2008, Congressman Edwards was vetted and became a finalist to become then Senator Barack Obama's vice presidential running mate.

Chet is a lifelong Methodist. He and his wife, Lea Ann, along with their sons, J.T. (13) and Garrison (11) attend the Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, and the McLean Baptist Church in McLean, Virginia.

Recognitions

- 2009 American Veterans Congressional Silver Helmet Award
- 2009 U.S. Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service
- 2009 U.S. Navy Distinguished Public Service Award
- 2009 Fleet Reserve Association Pinnacle Award

- 2008 American Legion Distinguished Public Service Award
- 2008 VFW Congressional Award
- 2008 National Coalition for Homeless Veterans Congressional Award
- 2008 U.S. Chamber of Commerce Spirit of Enterprise Award
- 2007 Texas Military Order of the Purple Heart Award
- 2007 "Going to Bat for Veterans" Award– National Disabled American Veterans
- 2007 "Platinum Award" from the American Psychiatric Association for support of PTSD research
- Congressional Achievement Award from the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) 2007
- Military Coalition Marix Award of Merit 2006
- Military Order of the Purple Heart National Inspirational Leadership Award 2005
- "Legislator of the Year" award from the Association of the United States Army 2003

- Quality of Life Award from the USO 2002
- Legislator of the Year from the bipartisan National Security Caucus 1998
- "National Security Leadership Award" from the American Security Council 1995
- "Deficit Hawk" Award from the Concord Coalition 1998
- "Fiscal Responsibility" Award from the Concord Coalition 1999
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce "Spirit of Enterprise" Award 2003-2008
- Friend of the Farm Bureau 2006
- Walter Cronkite Faith & Freedom Award from the Interfaith Alliance
- Congressional Leadership Award from the American Jewish Committee
- Religious Liberty Achievement Award from the Anti Defamation League
- Barbara Jordan/Hatfield Courage Award from the Baptist Joint Committee
- "Texas Hero" award from the Texas Chamber of Commerce

- Ten Best Legislators by Texas Monthly magazine

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